

File

Belridge Water Storage District

Statement to CALFED at Public Scoping Session Bakersfield, CA - April 18, 1996

Thank you for the opportunity to forward comments to you tonight on this most important subject. My name is Paul Hendrix and I am the General Manager of Belridge Water Storage District. The District is located in western Kern County and provides water for primarily agricultural use to some 50,000 acres. The District's sole source of water is a contract for 163,000 acre-feet of entitlement from the State Water Project.

It has been known for some time that the ability to export water from the Delta is restricted because of water circulation, levee stability, and fishery related problems. More recently the December 1994 Bay/Delta Accord put in place additional restrictions which result in reduced water supplies for Delta exporters, particularly in drier years.

As called for in the Accord, we have looked to CALFED to develop a long-term solution to the Delta problems. In our view, the CALFED solution is to supersede the three-year Accord standards and provide benefits to all stakeholders.

Tonight I simply want to express our overriding concern with the CALFED process to-date. Your set of objectives do not address the need for ~~increases~~ in Delta exports, and the ten Alternatives A through J likewise do not address this need. Solutions which, to use your phrasing, reduce the mismatch between Delta water supplies and beneficial uses by so-called demand management (that is, demand reduction) are simply unacceptable to the farming constituency I represent. We could not, therefore, justify any financial contribution to the solution process as it is currently oriented.

In our opinion, probably only a few of the Alternatives as presently constituted contain feasible features which could serve to meet this increased export need - a need which is acutely felt in dry years. These Alternatives involve an isolated canal to convey at least some portion of export water around the Delta to the State and Federal pumps.

We hope that some effort to realign this phase of CALFED's program to reflect the needs of these agricultural stakeholders in the southern San Joaquin Valley will be forthcoming. Again, thank you for the opportunity to be heard in this all-important process.